

The Framingham Circuit

Newsletter of the Framingham Amateur Radio Association December 1998, Vol. 65, No. 12

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Thursday, Dec 3

This Month's Meeting

December 3, Ed Weiss will present his perennially popular Electrical Safety performance. Prepare to be proselytized on proper preparation of parallel conductor cords and protective plugs.

An evening not to be missed!

Submitting Material to the Circuit

Material may be submitted for publication by sending it directly to the editor. This can be done by phone, by US Mail, or via the Internet (preferred).

The deadline for each issue is the **Wednesday**, one week before the monthly meeting.

by phone

Hrama
(508) 435-2055 (before 9:00PM please!)
College,
(508) 910-5296

by mail

Robert Hess, N1UVA
1 Cold Spring Brook Road
Hopkinton, MA 01748

by Internet

n1uva@ultranet.com

President's Message

I'm happy to say that the number of people asking to read the Circuit on the web page is increasing almost daily. This is great news, as every newsletter we do not mail saves us money, every month! The email reflector is beginning to grow as well. This is great news, as it allows us to keep in touch when we aren't in our cars or at the shack. If you haven't signed up for the reflector, instructions are elsewhere in this issue of the Circuit.

The distributed maintenance of the web pages seems to be going well. Marc, WA1R, has indicated that he would like to do a page for ARES/RACES topics. Pictures of October's Cub Scout Jamboree on the Air (JOTA), held at Nobscoot Reservation, are up on the web site also. There are others who maintain pages on other topics. I'm acting as general housekeeper, and may even get around to doing a 'president's page'. Updating the member listing is going to happen as soon as I figure out how to deal with a database issue that prevents us from listing members individually.

The Heathkit amp is again on the workbench. W1EQW and I are trying to get it ready for the contest. By the time this issue comes out, you'll know whether or not we were successful.

A grass roots movement has developed to order another round of FARA jackets. These are the fleece-lined blue zip-up jackets with the embroidered callsign and silkscreened FARA emblems. They are very popular, and well made. See Jim Congdon if you are interested in ordering one.

I'll close this by wishing everyone all the best for a happy and healthy holiday season. Here's hoping you all get whatever new toys you have been patiently waiting for all year.

73,
Peter, KA1AXY

Signing onto the FARA email reflector, FraminghamARA-L@qth.net

The email reflector works like an email repeater. Whatever you send to FraminghamARA-L@qth.net gets rebroadcast out to everyone else who has signed up. You can set the reflector to send you each message as it comes in, or to batch them all up into a 'digest' and send you one of those a day. To sign up, send a message to majordomo@qth.net with contents 'subscribe FraminghamARA-L'. (Without the quotes, of course). The subject can be left blank, the server only looks at the contents of the message. You'll get back a confirmation, follow its instructions exactly, then you're on the list!

It's a Girl!!!

by Sharon, KC1YR

FARA member Kamenko (T91EXA) Pajic and his wife Vesna Toukalek are the proud and happy parents of a baby girl, Bonnie, born Oct. 29 at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston. All are doing well.



Ham on a Hot Thin Island

by Steve, AA1IZ
Part 1

Every year, during the last weekend of July, hams throughout the world travel to remote islands. No it is not a coordinated global vacation schedule. It is the 24-hour Islands On The Air radio contest sponsored by the RSGB (Radio Society of Great Britain). The contest is rapidly growing in participation, but it still seems to be centered around the European community. Having given the contest a try from Gallops Island in Boston Harbor (NA148) in 1996 and having a few other island DXpeditions under my belt, I figured it was time for a serious effort closer to the epicenter of the activity. A variety of factors were used in strategically selecting the optimum location. The QTH had to be as rare as possible (IOTA booklets list the least active islands as indicated in award applications). Propagation back to central Europe on all bands had to be peak for the contest dates. Commercial electricity had to be available (Gallops Island had been a portable generator event - too difficult for a single op overseas). Transportation and housing were also taken in to account.

All considerations led to Greece and the southern Peloponese grouping of islands (EU-113). One island stood out as the prime choice; Elafonisos. A relatively inactive island with some guesthouses, easily approached by boat. My family agreed to the adventure as long as I limited my radio activity to the critical weekend.

Arrangements were made to charter a 58 foot sailboat for two weeks, scheduling the contest weekend in the middle of the trip. GPSC charters in Philadelphia slowly began to understand the magnitude of the project and helped me in selecting a captain who would get into the "craziness". Beside his 19 years of captaining skills he was heavily into computers and was "extremely resourceful".

So with captain and boat and island selected I put together my equipment list and began to gather my supplies. On this type of trip you need to start at the wall outlet and work your way

through to the antennas. First I needed my set of wall plug adapters. European outlets do not match those in the USA and may even vary from country to country. Next came my 220v to 110v transformer. Then came the 110v ac to 13v dc power supply. The rig was a Yaesu FT-890AT equipped with a Heil Pro headset and a straight key. The logging software was SuperDuper IOTA generously made available by EISDI as shareware (and officially recognized by the RSGB for submitting logs). An old 386x25 notebook computer ran the software and keyed the rig for CW QSO's. An MFJ antenna tuner handled the two antennas; a 3 element tri-bander fed with coax and a 180 foot center fed Zep fed with 450 ohm ladder line. Not knowing the distances to the antennas from the rig I brought 200 feet of coax and 200 feet of ladder line. Four five-foot lengths of Radio Shack antenna mast would be the tower for the beam.

As departure date approached, continued phone calls to the charter company brought assurances that even though we still did not have any firm arrangements on Elafonisos we should not worry. "Your captain, Costas, is very resourceful".

The entire station, less the beam, was carefully packed as carry on luggage. "No sir, I don't need any help carrying my bag." "It WILL fit under the seat in front of me!" "Please be careful - it is fragile electronic equipment."

The beam was packed in a six foot long, six inch diameter, heavy duty PVC pipe with special end caps.

Airlines have yet to reject my heavy-duty "fishing gear" case (aluminum rods for catching the best DX).

The flight from Boston to New York was on a small commuter plane. Everything had to be checked including carry on luggage. Well at least they squeezed the big tube on with out complaints.

At JFK airport I retrieved my carry on luggage. All seemed OK. We were flying to Athens via Geneva aboard Swiss Air. The large overhead storage bins handled my gear on the trans-Atlantic flight without incident. How

ever, the last leg to Athens was another small plane and carry on luggage was limited to one piece per person. My wife graciously checked her carry on and we were allowed on the plane.

Some fifteen hours after we left Boston we arrived in Athens - beautiful, exotic, ancient, and very hot. Our luggage slowly appeared on the conveyor. Everything, that is, except the big, white, heavy-duty PVC tube. After the Greek speaking Swiss Air representative finally understood what it was that was missing she started radiating different parts of the terminal to find the lost luggage. "Don't worry sir. It is coming up a special conveyor for oversize luggage. There, in the corner." With great relief I headed over to the oversize freight area.

There, coming up the conveyor, was the big white tube, and spilling out from either end were lengths of aluminum tubing. One end cap was totally missing and the other was shattered. Fortunately the elements were all taped together and the lengths of heavy string that I use for guy wires snagged the poles and prevented them from sliding completely out of the tube. The damaged luggage form could just not handle the incident. "What were the dimensions of the luggage? Was it made from fabric or leather? How would you describe the contents?" I was glad to have lost only some small hardware that had been in the tube and after realizing that all the beam was still there I repacked and taped cardboard to the tube ends.

We loaded everything in a cart and headed for customs. Needless to say the big white tube attracted immediate attention. "Please open", the customs officer was doing his job. I quickly pulled out my letter from the Greek authorities granting me licensing privileges (in both Greek and English). He called his supervisor. She read the letter, thought for a minute, looked at me, looked at the big white tube, and waved us through. There is nothing like the "respect" of one bureaucracy for another.

Continued Next Month...

If You Rent, Read This!

by Bob, W1RH

The FCC has adopted rules on the use of satellite dishes and other over-the-air reception devices for renters and others with exclusive use areas.

Section 207 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 directed the Commission to enact regulations to prohibit restrictions that impair a viewer's ability to receive video programming through devices designed for over-the-air reception of direct broadcast satellite service (such as Direct TV, Primestar, or The Dish Network), wireless cable, or television broadcast signals. At that time, the FCC adopted the rule that currently applies to antenna restrictions on property within the exclusive use or control of an antenna user who has a direct or indirect ownership interest in the property.

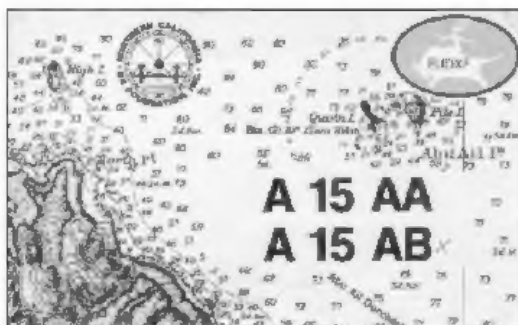
The Commission has now amended the above rule such that it prohibits restrictions that impair the use of dishes and television antennas in rented apartments, homes, or other dwellings, and adjacent outside property such as balconies, patios, gardens or yards that are exclusively used by the renter.

The above is somewhat similar to what American Amateurs know as PRB-1. It says that, if you rent, no one can prohibit you from installing a dish or TV antenna on any part of the property exclusively used by you. This is good news if you watch TV and could be good news if the Commission were to make similar amendments to PRB-1. Stay tuned, it would appear that the "door is open."

**READ THE CIRCUIT ONLINE...
SAVES PAPER AND POSTAGE**
email fara@fara.org and we'll set you up!

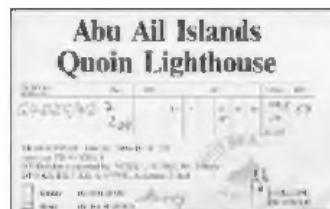
QSL Card

Submitted by Martin, AA10N



Thanks to Martin, AA10N, for submitting this month's QSL card. Martin worked A15AB when he was operating as G4DZC/W2 in February 1988. The QSO was on 20 meter SSB. The expedition operator was Harry, DL8CM who was operating from the Quoin Lighthouse in the Abu Ail Islands. Martin was one of the last stations to make it in the log of this expedition.

The Abu Ail Islands and Jabel al Tair Island were designated the A1 prefix and became a DXCC country in November 1945. The ARRL Awards Committee voted unanimously to accept the DXCC recommendation to delete Abu Ail Islands from the DXCC Countries List, effective March 31, 1991. When the Red Sea Lights Company relinquished control of the islands on that date, they became unadministered and no longer qualified for DXCC country status. The islands are now considered part of Djibouti and the prefix is J2/A although the A1 prefix might still be used. The islands have also been considered part of Yemen. This formerly rare DXCC country is now a rare IOTA island designated AS035. The lighthouse is located at the point where the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden meet.



The Circuit is in need of QSL cards!!!

If you would like to share your favorite QSL card, which could be your own, with the club, please send it my way! A caption or story would be appreciated also.

Don't let not having a scanner keep you from sending in your favorite card.

Many FARA Members have access to scanners, including Bob, W1RH.

Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are as follows; (Make checks payable to FARA)

Regular FARA \$10
Student / Retired \$5
Repeater (voluntary) \$10

FARA Horizons

Dec 3: Monthly Meeting
Dec 21: Board Meeting

Change of Address

If you would like to change the address on your Circuit label please direct all requests to Bev, N1LOO. She can be reached by the following:

Email: fara@fara.org
Phone: 626-2012